**“The Resurrection” The Present Truth 4, 5.**

E. J. Waggoner

We have seen that the object of our Lord’s second coming is to take his people to himself. And it has also been shown that Christ coming is not at the death of the saints, but that the only coming spoken of is a literal, personal coming in power and glory. From John 14:1-3 we draw the necessary conclusions that if is coming (yet in the future) is for the express purpose of taking his people to himself, then none of his people can be with him until he comes. This fact is plainly stated by Paul in the eleventh of Hebrews. After having given a list “of the faithful ones of whom the world was not worthy,”-those who “through faith subdued kingdoms, brought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouth of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong” (verses 33, 34),-as well as those who “had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment,” the apostle concludes thus: “And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.” Verses 39, 40. This is an explicit statement that even the martyrs of old must wait for their reward until we who are alive receive ours. {PTUK March 1, 1888, p. 66.1}

And this is exactly what our Saviour said. As he was one day eating in the House of a Pharisee, he took occasion to give some instruction concerning hospitality. Said he: “When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed *at the resurrection of the just*.” Luke 14:12-14. {PTUK March 1, 1888, p. 66.2}

There is to be but one reward given. Of those who looked for a return for their charities in this life, who gave alms to be seen of men, the Lord said, “They *have* their reward.” Matthew 6:1, 2. The applause of men, or an equivalent for the gift, is all they need expect; but those who live lives of unselfishness shall receive an everlasting recompense “at the resurrection of the just.” The words of Christ, “Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be” (Revelation 22:12), show that the resurrection, when the reward is given, is at the coming of Christ. And so again we have found that the righteous receive no reward till Jesus comes. {PTUK March 1, 1888, p. 66.3}

The proposition, already approved, is sustained by many other plain declarations of Scripture. Let us once more refer to Paul’s words to the Thessalonians: “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17. {PTUK March 1, 1888, p. 66.4}

Nothing can be plainer than this; the apostle has carefully guarded against any possibility of mistake. It is “the Lord himself” who comes. He comes, not secretly, but with “a shout,” and “with the trump of God,” whose reverberations shake the earth. That mighty blast awakens the millions of sleeping saints,-those who have died in faith, not having received the promise,-and they rise. This is the first thing accomplished. Then the living ones,-those who “remain until the coming of the Lord,”-are caught up “together with them” (those who have just been raised from the dead) in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air. This work of gathering the saints together is performed by the angels at the bidding of Christ see Matthew 24:30, 31. {PTUK March 1, 1888, p. 66.5}

“And *so*,” the apostle says, “shall we ever be with the Lord.” The word “so” means “in this manner,” “by this means.” How is it, then, that we go to be with the Lord? By the resurrection of the dead, and the translation of the living. There is no other way brought to view in the Bible, by which we can be with the Lord. {PTUK March 1, 1888, p. 66.6}

The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is not a product of the New Testament alone. When Abraham was called upon to offer up Isaac, he obeyed, “accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead.” Hebrews 11:19. When Job was suffering not only physical torture, but the anguish of being deserted and despised by all his friends and acquaintances, his faith in the coming of the Lord and the resurrection of the dead still sustained him. From his lips came this sublime utterance: “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.” {PTUK March 1, 1888, p. 66.7}

Isaiah, in prophetic vision looking down the ages and beholding the troubles of the church, utters these consoling words: “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.” Isaiah 26:19. Hosea, favoured with a similar view, speaks as in Christ’s stead, and says of the people of God: “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction.” Hosea 13:14. {PTUK March 1, 1888, p. 66.8}

We have space in this article for only one more quotation. The prophet David, putting himself in the place of the church, and considering the persecution which it must endure “from men of the world, which have their portion in this life,” anticipates the words of Paul in the eleventh of Hebrews, and says: “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness.” Psalm 17:15. When will the saints be in the likeness of Christ? The beloved disciple says: “We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” John 3:2. David, therefore, it did not look for satisfaction until the Lord’s coming; but if he could have gone to heaven at death, that certainly would have satisfied him. {PTUK March 1, 1888, p. 67.1}

The following comments on Psalm 17:15, by Dr. Barnes, will be read with interest:- {PTUK March 1, 1888, p. 67.2}

“‘I shall be satisfied.’ while *they* are satisfied with this world, I shall be satisfied only when I awake in the likeness of my God. Nothing can meet the wants of my nature; nothing can satisfy the aspirations of my soul, until that occurs. ‘When I awake.’ This is language which would be employed only by one who believed in the resurrection of the dead, and who was accustomed to speak of death as a sleep-a calm repose in the hope of a waking to a new life.... The obvious interpretation of the passage, therefore, so far as its sense can be determined from the connection, is to refer it to the awaking in the morning of the resurrection; and there is nothing in the language itself, or in the known sentiments of the psalmist, to forbid this interpretation.... ‘With thy likeness.’ Or, *in* thy likeness; that is, resembling thee.... I regard this passage, therefore, as one of the incidental proofs scattered through the Old Testament, which showed that the sacred writers under that dispensation believed in the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead; that their language was often based on the knowledge and belief of that doctrine, even when they did not expressly affirm it, and that in times of trouble, and under the consciousness of sin, they sought their highest consolation, as the people of God do now, from the hope and the expectation that the righteous dead will rise again, and that in a world free from trouble, from sin, and from death, they would live for ever in the presence of God, and find their supreme happiness in being made wholly like him.” {PTUK March 1, 1888, p. 67.3}

E. J. WAGGONER.

**“The Resurrection” The Present Truth 4, 6.**

E. J. Waggoner

In the preceding articles concerning the coming of the Lord, we have learned that he will certainly come, that his coming will be manifest to all, that it is for the purpose of receiving all his disciples to themselves, and that this is accomplished by the resurrection of the dead and the translation of the living. One or two more texts on the subject of that resurrection will be sufficient. {PTUK March 15, 1888, p. 82.1}

When Job was suffering the deepest affliction, and at the point of death, he asked: “If a man die, will he live again?” This was a very pertinent question for a man in his situation. Notice the form of the question: Not, “Shall he *continue* to live?” but, “Shall he live *again?*” This expression shows clearly that Job made a plain distinction between life and death. “Again” signifies “another time,” and indicates that an interval of time has elapsed since the same thing occurred or existed before. Job anticipated a time in which there would be no life, in which he would not exist, and he asked whether life would ever be restored. But he asked the question only to answer it, for he immediately added: “If a man die, shall he live again? all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee; thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.” Job 14:14, 15. {PTUK March 15, 1888, p. 82.2}

Now we may ask, When will the Lord call and be answered by those who are dead? Christ himself furnishes the answer: “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” John 5:26-29. And David says that it is at his coming that the Lord calls to his people. Psalm 50:3, 4. {PTUK March 15, 1888, p. 82.3}

Isaiah said, in prophetic vision, saw the end of the world, and the coming of the Lord. Speaking of the triumph of the righteous, he said: “He the Lord will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it.” Isaiah 25:8. If the Lord hath spoken it, it must be done. Paul tells how and when it will be done: “Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52. {PTUK March 15, 1888, p. 82.4}

Here, then, is the “change” of which Job spoke, It is a change from death to life, from mortal to immortal. And in what state did Job expect to be until this change should come? In death, for it was that of which he was speaking. The apostle also says that the dead as well as the living are to be changed. And here we find death called a sleep. We shall not all *sleep*, but both dead and living shall be changed. “For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, *then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” 1 Corinthians 15:53, 54. Death is not swallowed up in victory till Christ comes. The saints do not shout, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” until the voice of the Son of God calls them forth from their tombs. And what does this prove? That death and the grave have for a time triumphed, and held them captives. If it were not so, if the saints had passed at death immediately to a state of the eternal bliss, they would not be obliged to wait until the coming of the Lord to shout their victory. They could once voice their contempt for its weakness; or, more consistently, they could ascribe to it thanksgiving and praise for having liberated them from the toils of earth, and assured them into the joys of heaven. {PTUK March 15, 1888, p. 82.5}

Now we ask, What is the necessity for a resurrection of the dead? If the faithful of past ages are now “safe in the arms of Jesus,” as is so often taught and sung, what more can they need? Of what benefit to them will will a resurrection be? None at all. The Bible doctrine of the resurrection is directly opposed to the theory that men are taken to heaven at death. The Bible writers rested their entire hope in a resurrection; and this proves that they had no idea of the possibility (since they must die) of being with Christ in any other way. {PTUK March 15, 1888, p. 82.6}

Paul said that he counted all things loss for Christ, and for him gave up everything, and was willing to know the “fellowship of his sufferings,” and be “made conformable unto his death.” And what for? “If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” Philippians 3:11. Why did he esteem it so all-important to attain unto the resurrection of the dead? Let him answer: “If after the manner of man I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it to me, if the dead rise not?” 1 Corinthians 15:32. He had no hope in anything else. Let him once be convinced that the dead would not rise, and all incentive to action would have been taken away from one of the most tireless and zealous men that ever lived. Surely, then, the resurrection is a doctrine of no small importance. {PTUK March 15, 1888, p. 83.1}

In order to try to harmonize the doctrine of a final resurrection with the theory that the spirits of the good are taken to heaven immediately upon the death of the body, it is claimed that they do not receive the fulness of their reward until the resurrection. But this theory is overthrown by Paul’s words: “What advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?” Is it nothing to be in the presence of God and Christ and the angels? Is it nothing to be exempt from pain, and free from the assaults of Satan? Certainly to gain such a state, even if it were not the fullness of joy, is worth a great deal of effort. Paul’s words show that he had no knowledge of any benefit that would accrue to the dead except through the resurrection. And if he taught man to place all their hopes in the coming of the Lord and the resurrection, who shall dare to teach otherwise? If he did not know the exact truth in regard to the matter, to whom has a later revelation been made? So true are all the words of Paul that even an angel from heaven would bring a curse upon himself if he should teach anything different. Galatians 1:8. {PTUK March 15, 1888, p. 83.2}

In view of the testimony that has been quoted to show that the resurrection takes place at the coming of the Lord, it is hardly worth while to notice the position that it is at death; that the rising of the soul or spirit from the body is the resurrection. This theory makes the saints be with the Lord at death, and thus makes death to be the coming of the Lord, which we have seen is a false and absurd position. There were some in Paul’s day who taught that the resurrection was past, and he said that they had erred concerning the truth, and were overthrowing the faith of some. 2 Timothy 2:18. Nothing could more surely overthrow faith than such teaching, for who that accepted it could have any belief in the promises of a future second coming of Christ? It is as impossible to harmonize the theory of the past resurrection, or a resurrection at death, with the doctrine of the second coming of Christ, as to mix oil with water. {PTUK March 15, 1888, p. 83.3}

In closing, we will call attention to Revelation 22:4-6. John says: “I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God.... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” Ah,” says one, “that is what I believe; the souls of the martyrs went at once to live with Christ.” Let us see; these are not all the dead that John saw. He continues: “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power.” Now notice: “The rest of the dead lived not *again* until the thousand years were finished.” Then the dead that John first saw were living *again*. And if living again, this must be the second life, which is separated from the first by an interval called death. Then death and life are not the same. And this “living again,” after an interval, is called a resurrection. Then what is the resurrection? It is the “living again” of those who have been dead, and not the continued existence of something that has never died. Those who do not have part in the first resurrection, do not “live again” until the thousand years are finished. Then they have a resurrection. Now allowing that “the rest of the dead” died at the very beginning of the thousand years, and we have their death and their resurrection separated by a period of a thousand years. That does not look like a resurrection at death. {PTUK March 15, 1888, p. 83.4}

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